IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (New): A method for automatically allocating an IP address when a new station is connected in a network, comprising:

in a first phase, the new station in the network allocating itself its IP address autonomously by virtue of the network being monitored for at least one already allocated valid IP address; and

in a second phase, an

(i) IP address that is different than the already allocated IP number is generated automatically, with generation involving the IP address being altered only slightly,

(ii) availability of the generated IP address is checked by a request in the network; and

if the generated IP address is available, the new station allocating it to itself or, if it is not available, the generation of a new IP address (i) or the checking thereof (ii) being repeated.

Claim 19 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein in the second phase (i) the address is altered by altering just a last of four bytes, while first three bytes are adapted from the already allocated IP address.

Claim 20 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein within the first phase during monitoring, IP addresses at 0.0.0.0 or 255.255.255.255 are ignored and IP addresses in a range from 169.254.1.0 to 169.254.254.255 are logged, and wherein the second phase is initiated when the first different and hence valid IP address in the network has been monitored.

Claim 21 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the automatically generated IP address is either by virtue of a last byte being incremented or decremented by a fixed value, by virtue of the last byte being filled with a random number, by virtue of the last byte being derived algorithmically from a system constant or by virtue of it being assigned a fixed value.

Claim 22 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the availability of the generated IP address is obtained using an address resolution request with the generated IP address, and by virtue of the generated IP address being assumed to be available if there is no response or being assumed to be unavailable if a response is received.

Claim 23 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein a check is first carried out to determine whether the network contains a server for automatically allocating IP addresses, and wherein if there is such a server the new station assigns itself the IP address allocated by the server.

Claim 24 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein if no valid IP address is received in the first phase within a characteristic time, then automatic allocation is performed using Auto IP.

Claim 25 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the new station is a station with an audio output, and wherein the finally allocated IP address is output via the audio output.

Claim 26 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the assignment of the IP address is followed by automatic determination of broadcast address and netmask, the procedure being that a destination address of a monitored broadcast block is adopted as broadcast address.

Claim 27 (New): The method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the broadcast address is determined by using first three bytes of the allocated valid IP address from the network to check all possible broadcast addresses from the bottom upward with a query about protocols, and the valid broadcast address taken being the first IP address to which all stations in the network that have a lower IP address respond, and by then stipulating the netmask such that all bits above the broadcast component are set to 1 and all bits of the broadcast component are set to 0.

Claim 28 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein after the IP address has been allocated, periodic requests are used to check the network to determine whether the IP address of the new station is still unique, and wherein if a further station with the same IP address is found then a free and valid IP address is sought and allocated by re-entering the second phase.

Claim 29 (New): The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein at least one network station already integrated in the network executes a program that sends data packets in a form of markers to indicate to the new station what network it needs to integrate itself in.

Claim 30 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the markers are data packets of specific and identifiable block length and/or at specific and identifiable time intervals, the network being a cableless network.

Claim 31 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the markers are used to transfer network parameters to the new station directly or indirectly, using coding, in which case the new station has security and reliability of the data transmission verified using appropriate control mechanisms, and where the new station, following registration thereof in the network, also acknowledges its successful registration to the network station that is already integrated in the network and then the program on the network station that is already integrated in the network is automatically stopped.

Claim 32 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the markers are sent on based on an identification number that is specific to the new station.

Claim 33 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the markers are encrypted information, with the key being derived from a specific identification number.

Claim 34 (New): A network station for connection to a network comprising:

at least one communication interface configured to interchange data with the network;

at least one storage medium, and a processor connected to the interference and to the storage medium, the storage medium containing programs for execution by the processor,

wherein the storage medium contains a program for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 18, and wherein the network station automatically starts the program after connection to a network, provided that it has not yet been activated, and wherein the network station has an audio output and can output an allocated IP number via this audio output.

Claim 35 (New): A computer program for carrying out a method as claimed in claim 18.